

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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R 020958Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7350

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 4197

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR XF US IS EG SY JO

SUBJ: PRIME MINISTER RABIN'S VIEWS ON AN

OVERALL SETTLEMENT

SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER RABIN IN JUNE 20 MAARIV
INTERVIEW REVEALED THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED IN DETAIL
HIS VIEWS ON OVERALL SETTLEMENT WITH PRESIDENT FORD.
THESE VIEWS ARE ESSENTIALLY RESTATEMENT OF LABOR
PARTY 1969 "ORAL TORAH", MODIFIED BY PROPOSAL FOR
INTERWEAVING CERTAIN SOVEREIGNTY CHANGES WITH LONG-
TERM IDF PRESENCE IN SINAI AND GOLAN HEIGHTS.
ALTHOUGH INTERVIEW DOES NOT CONSTITUTE STATEMENT
OF OFFICIAL POLICY, MOST OBSERVERS HERE BELIEVE THAT
THESE VIEWS PROBABLY WOULD BE GOI POSITION RE OVER-
ALL SETTLEMENT. ISRAELI HARDLINERS IN ANY EVENT
WILL BE CERTAIN TO TRY TO HOLD RABIN TO THESE
POSITIONS IF AND WHEN NEGOTIATIONS FOR AN OVERALL
SETTLEMENT GET UNDER WAY. RABIN INTERVIEW,
ALTHOUGH IT HAS BEEN WIDELY INTERPRETED HERE AS
MODERATE AND FLEXIBLE, UNDERSCORES CONTINUING
DEEP GAP BETWEEN ISRAELI VIEWS AND PUBLICLY
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ARTICULATED DEMANDS OF ARAB STATES RE TERMS OF

OVERALL SETTLEMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. PRIME MINISTER RABIN TOLD HIS INTERVIEWER THAT DURING DISCUSSIONS WITH PRESIDENT FORD HE DISCUSSED ISRAEL'S NEEDS AND CONCEPTS CONCERNING DEFENSIBLE PEACE AND SECURE BORDERS, AND THAT HIS PRESENTATION INCLUDED THE USE OF MAPS. RABIN THEN SUMMARIZED FOR INTERVIEWER FOLLOWING POINTS REGARDING AN OVERALL SETTLEMENT.

2. ISRAEL MUST MAINTAIN A PRESENCE AND CONTROL IN SHARM EL SHEIKH AS WELL AS TERRITORIAL CONTINUITY BETWEEN SHARM EL-SHEIKH AND ISRAEL PROPER. INTERNATIONAL FRONTIER BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT WOULD HAVE TO BE CHANGED, ALTHOUGH IT WAS NOT IMPERATIVE THAT ALL THESE CHANGES CONSTITUTE A CHANGE OF SOVEREIGNTY BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT. CHANGES OF SOVEREIGNTY COULD BE INTERWOVEN WITH IDF DEPLOYMENT FOR LONG PERIODS OF TIME. RABIN ADDED THAT, EXCEPT FOR SHARM EL-SHEIKH HE DID NOT GO INTO DETAILS AS TO FINAL ARRANGEMENTS IN SINAI. (NOTE: IT IS WIDELY ASSUMED THAT RABIN'S OFF-REPEATED REFERENCE TO ADJUSTMENTS OF INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY REFERS TO APPROACHES TO RAFAH JUNCTION, ALTHOUGH HE HAS AVOIDED SAYING SO EXPLICITLY. HE HAS SAID, HOWEVER, IN CONTEXT OF CONTROVERSY OVER ILLEGAL SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY IN SEBASTIA (SUMMER, 1974), THAT AS REGARDS GOI POLICY ON SETTLEMENTS HE WOULD GIVE PREFERENCE TO GOLAN HEIGHTS, JORDAN RIVER VALLEY AND RAFAH.)

3. ISRAEL WOULD NOT BE ABLE, EVEN IN FINAL SETTLEMENT, TO COME DOWN FROM GOLAN HEIGHTS, ALTHOUGH IDF'S PRESENT LINE WAS NOT NECESSARILY THE FINAL ONE. INTERWEAVING OF SOVEREIGNTY CHANGES WITH IDF DEPLOYMENT COULD ALSO APPLY TO GOLAN HEIGHTS.

4. AS TO FINAL BORDER WITH JORDAN, THERE WAS NO GOI DECISION BUT ISRAELI GOVERNMENTS HAD DISCUSSED CONFIDENTIAL

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VARIOUS PLANS SINCE 1967, INCLUDING ALON PLAN AND PROPOSAL FOR JORDAN-ISRAEL FEDERATION ON WEST BANK WITH UNITED JERUSALEM AS ISRAEL'S CAPITAL. RABIN NOTED TO PRESIDENT THAT THESE IDEAS, INVOLVING ISRAELI SECURITY RULE ON WEST BANK, OPEN BORDER BETWEEN JORDAN AND ISRAEL, AND RIGHT OF JEWISH SETTLEMENT IN WEST BANK, HAD BEEN SUMMARILY REJECTED BY JORDAN. RABIN ALSO NOTED

THAT HE HAD REFERRED IN HIS DISCUSSION WITH
PRESIDENT FORD TO KING HUSSEIN'S PLAN FOR JORDANIAN-
WEST BANK FEDERATION WITH ITS CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION
IN AMMAN.

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5. AFTER OBSERVING THAT PRESIDENT FORD ONLY
LISTENED TO HIS PRESENTATION WITHOUT REACTING TO
THE VARIOUS SUGGESTIONS, RABIN TOLD INTERVIEWER " I
SUPPOSE THESE IDEAS AR NOT MUCH FAVORED BY THE US
ADMINISTRATION." END UNCLASSIFIED.

6. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. TO BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE,
THIS IS FIRST TIME THAT ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER HAS
PUBLICLY ADMITTED DISCUSSING OVERALL CONCEPT OF
FINAL BORDERS IN SUCH DETAIL WITH USG, ALTHOUGH
THERE HAVE BEEN PRESS REPORTS THAT MRS. MEIR HAD
DISCUSSED VARIOUS ASPECTS SUCH AS SHARM EL-SHEIKH
AND WEST BANK WITH PRESIDENT NIXON. IT IS ALSO
FIRST TIME THAT RABIN HAS PRESENTED THESE CONCEPTS
IN PACKAGE FORM TO ISRAELI PUBLIC, ALTHOUGH HE HAS
PUBLICLY DISCUSSED THEM SEPARATELY ON PREVIOUS
OCCASIONS.

7. RABIN INTERVIEW DOES NOT REPEAT NOT CONSTITUTE OFFICIAL GOI POLICY (WHICH IS EMBODIED IN OFFICIAL CABINET DECISIONS AND/OR MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS PRESENTED TO AN APPROVED BY KNESSET). BUT WIDELY CONFIDENTIAL

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HELD ASSUMPTION HERE IS THAT ELEMENTS OUTLINED BY RABIN IN HIS INTERVIEW IN ALL LIKELIHOOD WOULD BE ISRAELI POSITION IN NEGOTIATIONS FOR AN OVERALL SETTLEMENT. RABIN'S VIEWS IN THIS RESPECT ARE VIRTUALLY IDENTICAL WITH THOSE OF LABOR PARTY'S 1969 " ORAL TORAH" TO WHICH DEFMIN PERES AND LABOR PARTY SECRETARY GENERAL ZARMI REFERRED IN LATE JUNE. (T.A. 3908) THUS RABIN NOW HAS PUBLICLY IDENTIFIED HIMSELF WITH WHAT HAS BEEN AND APPARENTLY REMAINS POSITION OF RULING LABOR PARTY ON OVERALL SETTLEMENT (DESPITE EFFORT OF SOME MODERATE ELEMENTS IMMEDIATELY AFTER OCTOBER WAR TO PUSH IT TO POSITION OF GREATER FLEXIBILITY). AS WE NOTED IN TA 3598 EVEN THE MAPAM/ILP "DOVES" AS OF NOW ARE NOT SO FAR AWAY FROM THIS POSITION.

8. WE BELIEVE THAT RABIN'S MAIN PRUPOSE IN MAKING THESE STATEMENTS AT THIS TIME IS TO PUT ON THE RECORD HIS VIEW ON WHAT OUT TO BE ISRAELI POSITION IN CASE OVERALL SETTLEMENT ISSUE BECOMES ACTIVE IN NEAR FUTURE--PARTICULARLY IF NEGOTIATIONS FOR INTERIM GOE-GOI SETTLEMENT COLLAPSES. HIS PRIMARY AUDIENCE IS ISRAELI PUBLIC, WHICH NOW HAS CLEAR IDEA OF WHERE HE STANDS ON NUMBER OF CRITICAL NEGOTIATING ISSUES. SOME COMMENTATORS BELIEVE THAT RABIN ALSO WANTED TO LAUNCH TRIAL BALLOON TO DETERMINE WHETHER ANY SIGNIFICANT OPPOSITION TO THESE VIEWS EXIST WITHIN CABINET.

9. HOWEVER INTERVIEW MAY BE RECEIVED OUTSIDE ISRAEL, DOMINANT INTERPRETATION HERE IS THAT RABIN'S BIEWS CONSTITUTE MODERATE AND CONCILIATORY APPROACH. FROM THE ISRELI PERSPECTIVE, EMPHASIS IS NOT ON WHAT ISRAEL INSISTS ON RETAINING BUT RATHER ON WHAT IS SEEN AS FLEXIBILITY AND GENEROSITY REGARDING THAT PART OF OCCUPIED TERRITORY WHICH IT IS PREPARED TO GIVE BACK. IN ADDITION, RABIN'S FORMULATION RE INTERWEAVING ELEMENTS OF SOVEREIGNTY CHANGE AND IDF PRESENCE IN SINAI AND GOLAN HEIGHTS IS INTERPRETED HERE AS SERIOUS SEARCH FOR PRAGMATIC SOLUTION. IT IS STRIKING THAT MOST CRITICISM SO FAR IS FROM RIGHT WING PRESS, CON-
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CERNED THAT PRIME MINISTER UNNECESSARILY HAS
GIVEN UP TACTICAL ADVANTAGE BY REVEALING HIS
HAND, AND THAT ARAB STATES WILL SEE HIS STATEMENTS
AS OPENING POSITION ON WHICH TO HASE THEIR DEMANDS
FOR FURTHER CONCESSIONS--BACK TO 1967 BORDERS.

10. INTERVIEW UNDERSCORES PERSISTENCE
OF DEEP GAP BETWEEN ISRAELI VIEWS AND PUBLICLY
ARTICULATED DEMANDS OF ARAB STATES AS REGARDS
BASIS FOR AN OVERALL SETTLEMENT. IN FACT,
OVERALL SETTLEMENT WOULD APPEAR VIRTUALLY UNATTAINABLE
ON TERMS PRESENTED BY RABIN. MANY ISRAELIS THEMSELVES
DOUBTLESS HAVE COME TO SAME CONCLUSION AND WE
CAN ANTICIPATE THAT ISRAELI HARDLINERS WILL REMIND
RABIN OF THIS INTERVIEW IF AND WHEN NEGOTIATIONS
FOR OVERALL SETTLEMENT GET UNDERWAY. END CONFIDENTIAL.
VELIOTES

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